

U.S Consulate Osaka-Kobe Web Chat 12-17-09

Disclaimer: Immigration laws and regulations are subject to change. Please contact us or look at our web site for the most current information.

U.S. Consulate Osaka Kobe 3: Hi, everyone. We will begin shortly. If you could hold your questions, I would greatly appreciate it. Thanks for attending!

U.S. Consulate Osaka Kobe 4: Hi everyone! My name is Patrick, I'm a consular officer at the American Consulate in Osaka. Welcome to our first-ever visa web chat. I'm here with my colleague Mark, and we'll be available for the next 1 ½ hours to answer any of your visa-related questions. Of course, the information you read today should be valid for all American embassies and consulates where non-immigrant visas are issued. What's on the agenda for today, Mark?

U.S. Consulate Osaka Kobe 3: Today we'll be discussing visas for students, graduate students, post-doctoral researchers, teachers and professors, and just about anyone else wishing to enter the United States for education or training purposes.

U.S. Consulate Osaka Kobe 4: Could you give us a few examples?

U.S. Consulate Osaka Kobe 3: Of course! Some examples are short and long-term study or training, attendance or participation in an academic conference, and participation in exchange programs.

U.S. Consulate Osaka Kobe 4: Speaking about conferences, I know that we have a lot of third-country nationals out there – from countries like China, Indonesia, Malaysia, and Bangladesh (just to name a few) – and, unlike Japanese citizens, most will need a visa to enter the United States to attend conferences.

U.S. Consulate Osaka Kobe 3: That's right. Those wishing to attend a conference will need to apply for a regular tourist visa (B-2). Other visa types are F-1 (for students), J-1 (for exchanges, scholars, and trainees), and M-1 (for vocational study).

U.S. Consulate Osaka Kobe 4: What about Japanese citizens?

U.S. Consulate Osaka Kobe 3: Japanese citizens wishing to study in the United States will need student visas. Scholars and students conducting research at a U.S. university will also need visas.

U.S. Consulate Osaka Kobe 4: What if the study is only for one month? I know there are a lot of Japanese citizens who like taking short intensive English language courses.

U.S. Consulate Osaka Kobe 3: If that study is more than 18 hours a week, then they'll still need to get a visa.

U.S. Consulate Osaka Kobe 4: Now let's take some questions from our Internet audience.

Alla 2: Hello! I'm an exchange student in Otaru University of Commerce, came from Russia, And we will have a long vocation in spring, so i would like to go to U.S.A during this time for studying English and traveling also. And i would like to ask you if it possible and if yes, what documents do i need since i'm in Japan? Thank you very much for help!

U.S. Consulate Osaka Kobe 3: Alla 2, thank you for your question. Generally, you need to bring documents that show that you have ties to Japan or your home country such as school enrollement, bank documents, scholarship information, previous passports showing previous travel, etc.

cosmos: When is a new format DS-160 announce?

U.S. Consulate Osaka Kobe 4: We expect the new DS-160 form, which will be an electronic version of the visa application, to be launched sometime in spring. Please check our website for updates.

Zhang: Hello. I am a Ph.d student in Japan. And I am from China. I want to apply the B1 visa to join a conference in the USA from 1th March to 6th March. If I start the application from 20th January, do you think I can get the visa before 1th March?

U.S. Consulate Osaka Kobe 3: Hi Zhang. That depends. Generally, we are able to process applications for scientists, researchers, students and high-tech workers in about two weeks. However, we strongly recommend that you apply as early as possible. For example, we have many Chinese PhD students that apply for conferences 3-4 months in advance.

Guanqun Liang: To Zhang, I am from china too. I applied on Nov.19. Still waiting results. I think it depends on personal situation.

U.S. Consulate Osaka Kobe 4: That's right -- every case is different and it depends on a person's particular situation. I issued several visas today for Chinese graduate students going to the U.S. for conferences, but a few other cases needed further administrative processing, which could take a few weeks to several months. Guanqun Liang, we hope to get your visa to you soon!

naoko: i can you help K-1 visa

U.S. Consulate Osaka Kobe 3: Hi Naoko, thank you for your question. We want to remind everyone that we will be focusing on answering questions about visas for students and academics wishingin to go to the US. Btw, for K-1 related questions, please contact the US Embassy in Tokyo.

Toshi: Hello, everyone! I am a student from Kyoto Univ. My question is if I can go to interview without having I-20. I have already made an appointment by expecting to receive my I-20 in time. However, I have not received my I-20 from school. Do I have to change my appointment, or I could come to the interview without I-20?

U.S. Consulate Osaka Kobe 4: Hi Toshi! You can still come in for an interview and then mail us your I-20 form when you get it later. By the way, an I-20 form is what the school sends to students to show us -- the folks that interview you for a visa -- a student's admission to the school.

daisuke: can we try again? and we will be able to get F-1 visa?

Asae: I'm Asae. May I ask a question? My husband and I will go to San Diego next March. My husband will do research job as a postdoctoral fellow at Burnham Institute. We already have DS-2019 for him to get J1 visa and for me to get J2 visa. But, I will also have a possibility to get research job at another institute and have a chance to get J1. They have not prepared DS-2019 for me to get J1 visa. Maybe they can't make deadline for my departure in early March. In case missing deadline, I can go with J2. Is it possible to change from J2 to J1 in the US? Please let me know where and how I can change.

U.S. Consulate Osaka Kobe 4: In principle, you should be able to apply to DHS once you're in the U.S. to do what's called a "status change." BUT we STRONGLY recommend that you contact the institution to get your DS-2019 for a J-1 visa BEFORE going to the U.S. So again, you can go to the U.S. on the J-2, but try your best to take care of your J-1 before March. Hope that helps!

ChiJap: I am a Chinese, working in a corporation of Japan, in Yamanashiken. I am appointed to manager a related division in subsidiary corp. of China from Jan.2011. But before that I will be dispatched to subsidiary corp. of America to study more businesses (making up system, sales) for one year from Jan. 2010. I got my doctor degree from Tokyo institute of technology and work in this corp. from April 2008. I am still a junior engineer and my salary will be paid by parent corp. of Japan during I am in subsidiary corp. of America (Jan. 2010~ Jan. 2011). So would you be kind enough to tell me which visa is suitable for me? And how long it will take me after interview in embassy without more wanted materials. I will really appreciate your more advises.

U.S. Consulate Osaka Kobe 4: If it's short-term business training, then a B-1 (business) visa should be fine.

Asae: Thank you very much. But what is DHS?

U.S. Consulate Osaka Kobe 4: Sorry about that! It stands for the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

daisuke: 2 度目の学生ビザを申請する予定です。214 の却下理由だったため、それをつ覆す書類を準備しました。しかし、美容師と言うだけで審査の基準が厳しいと聞いた事があるのですが、それは本当ですか？

U.S. Consulate Osaka Kobe: 学生ビザの申請者は、一番の渡米の目的は勉強でなければなりません。学業の為に渡米する事を面接時にはつきりと証明しなければなりません。そして、アメリカの学校から発行されている **I-20** に記載されているだけの勉強を十分終える事ができる事を面接時の段階ではつきりと証明する義務、必要があります。この条件を満たさなければ学生ビザを発行する事はできません。

Cookdo: Hi, I would like to ask you about booking for interview.

U.S. Consulate Osaka Kobe 4: Booking an interview is really easy! Just go to <http://japan.usembassy.gov/e/tvisa-main.html> for step-by-step instructions..

Mayu: はじめまして。神戸市外国語大学のまゆです。DS-156 についての質問ですが、VISA 申請費用の領収書を貼る場所がわからないので、教えてください。日米教育委員会発行の公式ガイドブックには領収書を貼って提出と書かれていますが、申請用紙には場所が見当たりません。貼らずに提出してもいいのですか？

U.S. Consulate Osaka Kobe: ビザ申請費用の領収書は、申請書 DS-156 の 3 枚目にあたります、バーコードのページに貼ってください。バーコードを隠さない様に、バーコードの上の空欄の所にのりで貼ってください。もし空欄がない場合は、裏面に貼ってもかまいません。

kojima: Good afternoon. My name is Takafumi Kojima. I'm a highschool student. Now I'm thinking about studying abroad. Hopefully I'd like to go to college to study art. However, unfortunately I'm not so good at English. I have little confidence in English. Would you give me some good advice about studying abroad. The US is one of the candidate-countries I'm thinking about.

U.S. Consulate Osaka Kobe 3: Hi Kojima. I would recommend going to our website. It has lots of information. <http://japan.usembassy.gov/e/irc/irc-ryugaku.html>

Saya: Hello, I need to extend my F1 visa but I'm not sure how long that process would take.

U.S. Consulate Osaka Kobe 4: Extending an F-1 visa is simple and involves the student making an appointment for an interview. Most continuing students get their new F-1 visa within 2 days of their interview. So, if you came in today for an interview, you'll probably get your passport with the new visa returned to you by Saturday.

Ozawa: back to needing a visa - so if my classes are 15 hours per week, I do not need a student visa?

U.S. Consulate Osaka Kobe 2: If you are Japanese and your study is incidental to your travel, then you do not need a student visa. Incidental study would be for example taking surf lessons while you are vacationing in Hawaii.

U.S. Consulate Osaka Kobe 2: If you are not Japanese, then you will need to apply for a B1/B2 visa for "incidental" studying or you will need to apply for a student visa.

kazumi: 私は龍谷大学の学生です。今度 UCLA に留学する予定で今月の 22 日に F-1 ビザの面接の予約をしたのですが、予約確認書をなくしてしまいました。当日、領事館に行っても面接を受けることができますか？

ChiJap: if it's short-term business training, then a B-1 (business) visa should be fine. 1years would be thought as short-term?

U.S. Consulate Osaka Kobe: For Kazumi:こちらで、調べたいと思います。あなたのフルネーム、電話番号先をファックス: 06-6315-5962 に送ってください。後ほどこちらから連絡いたします。

Takada: During my OPT, I came back to Japan. My F-1 visa was expired, so I will apply for a new F-1 visa for my master's program. Do I have to submit my OPT card and form I-797 on the interview day?

U.S. Consulate Osaka Kobe 2: @ChiJap: One year would not generally be considered as short term. Also, this sounds more business related. Please send us an e-mail at OsakaNIV@state.gov.

U.S. Consulate Osaka Kobe 4: The short answer is, please bring ALL of your supporting documents in case we have questions about your OPT and other activities.

Sayaka UI: Hello,I'm a staff member of Japanese travel agency. Do Japanese people need to have F 1 visa to take part in the language school even if just take English lessons less than 15 hours per week?

kaneda: When I stay in U.S by I visa as a journalist. Can I go to English language school or University. Do I need I visa and F1 visa?

U.S. Consulate Osaka Kobe 2: @Sayaka UI and kaneda: Please see our answer to Kozawa's question. If the study is "incidental" to the travel--not the primary purpose--then a B1/B2 visa (or an I as in Kaneda's case) would be sufficient. However, if studying is the primary purpose for going to the United States, then you must apply for a F-1 visa.

Zhang: I am a student from China, I plan to join a conference, Should I apply B1 or B2?

U.S. Consulate Osaka Kobe 4: Mr. Zhang - if you are planning on attending a conference, you should apply for a B1 visa (short term business), not B2

(which is sightseeing). However, if you plan on doing any sightseeing, we recommend you apply for a B1/B2 visa, which allows you to do both. By the way, the visa fee is the same regardless of whether you are getting a B1.B2, or B1/B2 visa. Hope that helps.

Poko: 現在 51 歳の主婦です。子育てが一段落しましたので、ハワイへの留学を考えております。ただ、噂によると主婦は ビザがでないと聞きました。ほんとですか？

U.S. Consulate Osaka Kobe: 留学ビザの場合、アメリカで勉強をすること、アメリカでの勉強が終わり次第日本に帰国すること、そして勉強にかかる費用を支払うことができるだけの残高を証明すること。基本的にはこの 3 点をヴィザ申請時に証明する必要があります。実際会社を退社後にアメリカ留学をする方方には、ほとんどの場合ビザを発行しております。どうぞ、申請をしてください。

U.S. Consulate Osaka Kobe 2: At this time, we are not going to take any more questions and will try to answer the remaining questions we have within the remaining amount of time left.

Maria Beniychuk: Good day. I've found on your website that visa is not given on a same day as the interview. Are there some cases when you can issue the visa on a same day as the interview? For example if the conference in USA will be soon and because of the holidays season it will take a lot of time to get visa by post. Thank you

Kashima: はじめまして。B ビザのことなのですが、教えていただけると幸いです。B-2 ビザで渡米するための活動のひとつとして、「友人・親族の訪問」と挙げられています。B1 で長期出張中の夫は、この親族の定義に含まれますか？

U.S. Consulate Osaka Kobe: 基本的には B-2 ビザは、観光、友人親族の訪問等です。B-1 ビザは、会議、展示会などの出席等ビジネスに関する目的の場合です。国籍によつては、たとえば、日本国籍の場合は、観光目的でも B1/B2 の両方のビザを発行しております。

U.S. Consulate Osaka Kobe 2: @ Beniychuk: Generally, it takes only two days to receive your visa. We only interview and issue visa on the same day when there is a "serious" emergency. Attending a business meeting does not usually qualify as a "serious emergency".

Emi: I am a Japanese passport holder. I have a question about financial statement from the bank that we need to submit to prove our financial capability. How recent does a statement have to be from the day of visa application?

kaneda: I am a Japanese passport holder. I have a question about financial statement from the bank that we need to submit to prove our financial capability. How recent does a statement have to be from the day of visa application?

U.S. Consulate Osaka Kobe 4: Hi Emi - regarding financial statements, the more recent the better. Most applicants give us "zandaka shomeisho" dated within a week or so of their interview. Sometimes applicants simply show us their bank books (ginko tsuchou), which is also acceptable.

aki: There is a student whose English ability is insufficient to enter an university she wishes. So, she first wants to go to a language school(ESL) in US for a half year. She is thinking to receive F1 valif for a half yeay from the language scholl. But, will she be able to extend the visa after the half year in US to enter an university???

U.S. Consulate Osaka Kobe 4: For Japanese students, we usually automactically issue a 5-year student visa. This allows a student, like the one you mention, to study English at one institution and then transfer to a university.

Mauricio: Dear Sir, I am a Brazilian student living in Japan. I would like to go to Brazil to visit my family, through a flight that stops in the USA. Can I apply for a Visa at the Osaka Consulate, or do I need to go to Tokyo?

U.S. Consulate Osaka Kobe 2: Yes

sachi: 銀行残高証明書の有効期限について：申請予定日より〇ヶ月以内に発行のものが望ましい、等有効期限の規定があるのか教えてください。

U.S. Consulate Osaka Kobe: 基本的には、3ヶ月以内に発行された、残高証明書を提出してください。

U.S. Consulate Osaka Kobe 2: @Mauricio: You can apply in Osaka or Tokyo, whichever is most convenient for you. Sorry for the confusion.

Naho Fujisawa: Hello,I'm Naho. I want to ask about DS-156. I already completed DS-156 and printed it out. and I found mistakes. Can I change it and print out a new DS-156? Can I get an appointment for interview with a new bar-cord number? Do I need to bring an old DS-156?

U.S. Consulate Osaka Kobe 4: Please come with your DS-156 with the mistakes and we'll manually change it on the day of your interview.

aki: So, she can transfer schools without going out of US to change details in her F1 Visa?

U.S. Consulate Osaka Kobe 4: Yes. It should be no problem.

U.S. Consulate Osaka Kobe 3: We will answer two more questions.

hitoshi: J1 ビザを取得できても J1 ビザで同行する家族の J2 ビザが拒否されることはよくあることでしょうか。

U.S. Consulate Osaka Kobe: 通常、J1 と J2 の関係がしっかりと証明できましたら、拒否をされることはありません。しかし実際のケースを審査しなければわからない場合もあるでしょう。

Toyoda: ご担当者様 1年後くらいリカに留学をしたいと考えている者です。私アメリカに留学を考えていますが、現地で学校を見たいと考えていますが、F-1 ビザは日本でのみの申請になるかと思います。ですので短期間でビザ申請をして現地で I-20 を延長したいと考えていますが大丈夫でしょうか？

U.S. Consulate Osaka Kobe: 通常学生ヴィザの場合 5 年間のビザが発行されます。現地に新しい I-20 を取得し滞在することは、可能です。

kaori: 短大附属の語学学校から、おなじ短大へ進学した場合、F-1 ビザを延長する際は面接無しでビザ申請できますか？

U.S. Consulate Osaka Kobe: 通常 F-1 ビザは 5 年間有効のものが発行されますので、そのままアメリカに滞在して大学に入る場合はヴィザの申請をしない必要はありません。

U.S. Consulate Osaka Kobe 4: Thank you for all of your great questions! Unfortunately, we've run out of time, but, based on today's excellent participation, we'll definitely continue with these web chats, so please be sure to check our website for updates. On behalf of the entire U.S. Consulate General in Osaka-Kobe thank you again for your participation and happy holidays!!!